

Historic District Review Committee

Staff Report July 13, 2009

Action Items

CAPP 2009-0011 Waterford Old School: Install New Metal Balustrade on Front Porch and Steps in the Waterford Historic District. MCPI 303-17-4976.

Background

The subject property, the Waterford Old School, is located at 40222 Fairfax Street in the Waterford Historic District. It is used as the community center for the village. In 2007, a fire severely damaged the 1910 school resulting in demolition of the auditorium addition. In 2008 and 2009, the Waterford Foundation undertook extensive rehabilitation of the 1910 classroom building with HDRC approval under CAPP 2008-0003. They also received HDRC approval for a new auditorium addition to the building (CAPP 2008-0025) that has yet to be constructed.

The Waterford Foundation proposes to install a metal balustrade on the front porch and steps of the original Waterford Old School in order to meet building code compliance. This balustrade will match the one approved for the entry ramp and stairs into the new auditorium addition. The new balustrade will be 3' tall with 1" main balusters finished with a collar at the base. Panels will be comprised of ½" balusters attached to a 4" high bottom rail. The handrail will be 1" high and 1½" wide, ending in a lamb's tongue.

The new metal balustrade will replace a 1" pipe handrail on the stairs that was removed during the restoration of the front porch columns and stairs. In the Statement of Justification, the representative for the Waterford Foundation states that this pipe railing was installed "some years ago" to assist the elderly on the stairs. Therefore, according to the Foundation it is not considered original to the building.

Since VDHR has an easement on the property, changes to the building must be reviewed and approved by the State as well as the County. In an email dated June 23, 2009, VDHR approved the balustrade proposed in the current application stating that the "design matches that for the auditorium, and is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation."

According to the Zoning Administration Referral dated June 29, 2009, there are no zoning issues with this application.

Analysis

The Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines: Waterford Historic District (Waterford Guidelines) state that architectural details should be compatible with the existing building (Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for New Construction: Architectural Details

and Decoration, Guideline 1, p. 73). The style and material of the proposed metal balustrade is consistent with balustrades found on institutional buildings dating to the early twentieth century. Furthermore, it will match the balustrade approved for the new auditorium addition, maintaining consistency of this architectural detail.

Findings

1. The proposed metal balustrade is consistent with the style and materials of balustrades on institutional buildings of the early twentieth century, meeting the Waterford Guidelines for architectural details.
2. The proposed balustrade matches an HDRC and VDHR approved balustrade to be installed on the new auditorium addition, maintaining consistency of this architectural detail.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the application.

Suggested Motions

1. *I move that the Historic District Review Committee approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2009-0011 for the proposed new metal balustrade on the front porch and steps of the Waterford Old School at 40222 Fairfax Street in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the following findings...(see findings above).*
2. *I move that the Historic District Review Committee approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2009-0011 for the proposed new metal balustrade on the front porch and steps of the Waterford Old School at 40222 Fairfax Street in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the following findings (see findings above)....and the following conditions....*
3. *I move alternate motion...*